

## Christmas Fire Safety Tips!

The holidays are rapidly approaching and many a wide-eyed child will be bubbling with excitement as they anticipate the great and wondrous events of this Christmas season. To help ensure a merry Christmas and fire safe holiday season for everyone, the 293d BSB Fire & Emergency Service Division suggests that several basic fire safety guidelines be observed.

Buy a fresh Christmas tree.

If the needles are already falling off, the tree is too dry and should not be purchased. Once a tree is selected, leave it outside until it is time to decorate it. Be sure the tree is securely fastened in a sturdy holder filled with water. It is a good idea to



trim at least a one-inch piece from the bottom of the tree after purchase. This increases the tree's ability to absorb water. During the period of time that your tree is indoors, water it regularly. Do not locate the tree in an area where it will be subjected to intense heat, such as near a woodstove or heater. Be careful not to block exit paths and doorways with the tree. Use Christmas lights which utilize lower wattage bulbs or are of the "twinkle" type. This type generates less heat under prolonged use. Be certain all light strings are in good condition and operating properly. Tighten bulbs in sockets to prevent arcing. Never use candles or any open flame device on Christmas trees. Don't overload electrical circuits by plugging too many cords into a single outlet. All circuits should be protected by the proper fuse appropriately matched to the appliances being utilized. Christmas lights should always be turned off when no one is home or whenever everyone has retired for the evening.

Plug-in electric toys should be labeled by a fire safety testing agency. Don't buy highly combustible toys or ones that use flammable liquids. When you are entertaining guests in your home who smoke, provide large ash trays and check for cigarettes in upholstered furniture before going to bed. Cigarette fires are still the leading cause of fire fatalities in the home.

Please be careful and observe these simple fire safety rules,  
and enjoy a happy holiday season.

**USAG-M Fire & Emergency Services Division**